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Wednesday, February 14, 2018 metro.us | t: MetroNewYork | f: MetroNewYork

MetroOxoOx

Whether you're single, off the market or somewhere in between, Valentine's Day is a sweet time to appreciate love, romance, and let's face it — sex.

ILLUSTRATION BY AGATA NOWICKA

7 'Match' stats on
NYC dating. 4

The 100-year history of the
Valentine's Day card. 6

The best Valentine's Day streaming for a
steamy night ... on the couch. 17

WELCOME TO METRO.US

MORGAN ROUSSEAU, MANAGING EDITOR

Love isn't always fair, but like it or not, it's in the air. Maybe today's a day of roses and chocolates and champagne-fueled sex. Or maybe not, and that's OK. No longer does being single evoke clichéd images of microwave dinners and sobbing in the shower. Read on for ways to enjoy Valentine's Day, be it at home or while painting the town red (and pink). Visit metro.us for more stories on sex and dating all year round.



INTEL CHIEF: RUSSIA WILL INTERFERE IN ELECTION

Leaders of U.S. intelligence agencies warned on Tuesday that Russia will try to interfere in the 2018 U.S. midterm election by using social media to spread propaganda and misleading reports, much as it did in the 2016 campaign. Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats told a congressional committee that Russia and other foreign entities were likely to attack U.S. and European elections this year and

beyond, adding that Moscow believes similar efforts successfully undermined U.S. democracy two years ago. Coats, a former senator appointed by President Donald Trump as Washington's top intelligence official, said he had already seen evidence Russia was targeting U.S. elections in November. "Frankly, the United States is under attack," Coats said at the Senate Intelligence Committee's annual hearing on worldwide threats.

FBI'S WRAY CONTRADICTS WHITE HOUSE ON PORTER

FBI Director Christopher Wray on Tuesday contradicted the White House version of events surrounding the background check for a former top aide accused of domestic abuse by two ex-wives, triggering more disarray around the controversy. Wray, in testimony on Capitol Hill, said the agency in late July completed a background check for security clearance for former

White House staff secretary Rob Porter, who resigned a week ago amid allegations of abuse from two former wives. Wray's comments conflict with the White House assertion that the FBI and intelligence agencies had not completed investigations into Porter. Porter had been operating under a temporary clearance that gave him access to some sensitive information without a final security clearance.



SECOND JUDGE BLOCKS TRUMP ON ENDING DACA

A second U.S. judge on Tuesday blocked President Donald Trump's decision to end a program that protects immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children from deportation. District Judge Nicholas Garaufis in Brooklyn ruled that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, cannot end in March as the Republican administration had planned, a victory for Demo-

cratic state attorneys general and immigrants who sued the federal government. The decision is similar to a Jan. 9 ruling by U.S. District Judge William Alsup in San Francisco that DACA must remain in place while litigation challenging Trump's decision continues. The legal battle over DACA complicates a debate currently underway in Congress on whether to change the nation's immigration laws.

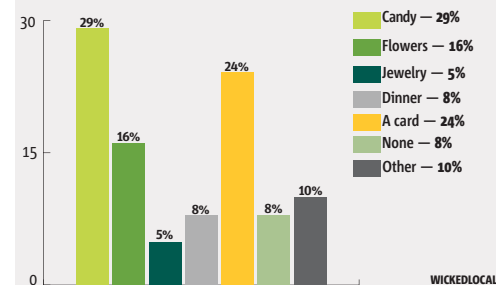
CHELSEA BOMBER GETS TWO LIFE SENTENCES

The New Jersey man convicted of planting bombs in Chelsea in 2016 received two life sentences on Tuesday, after expressing no remorse in a Manhattan courtroom for engineering the explosion that injured 30 people. "I don't harbor hatred towards anyone," Ahmad Khan Rahimi said in a courtroom packed with spectators, including some of the people who were injured when

one of his bombs exploded on Sep. 17, 2016. "But through life experience, I have learned to understand why there's such frustration between the Muslim community overseas and the American people." Rahimi, a 30-year-old U.S. citizen born in Afghanistan, said that he had been "harassed" by authorities while traveling because of his Muslim appearance after he started practicing the religion.

VALENTINE'S DAY GIFTS

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Match: New York City dating no different than other cities

"We don't stand out, which I think is sort of cool. Wherever you live in America, singles have real things they want, their wants are universal."



NIKKI M. MASCALI
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We've surely all heard horror stories of what it's like to be single in New York City, but here's a news-flash: Dating in NYC really isn't all that different from anywhere else, at least according to the latest "Singles in America" survey from Match.com.

"We don't stand out, which I think is sort of cool," said Dr. Helen Fisher, senior scientific adviser to Match and a New Yorker herself. "We're a big international city, and



According to Match.com's new survey, 84 percent of people said the No. 1 component for good sex is a caring partner, followed by an enthusiastic partner. **istock**

this is showing that wherever you live in America, singles have real things they want, their wants are universal."

In Match's eighth annual "Singles in America," the relationship company surveyed more than 5,000 non-member singles from ages 18 to 70-plus on everything from appropriate first-date behavior and

intimacy to robot sex and, yes, politics.

New Yorkers and other American singles are on par when it comes to crossing political party lines to date. Seventy-one percent of city singletons (and 72 percent of other Americans) would date someone from the opposing party.

"This is a perfect example of where love triumphs

over politics," Fisher said. "Finding a partner is the most important thing you do with your life. This is the person you may pass your DNA onto the next generation with, who might even put you in the grave, and singles are putting that above politics and leading the wave of being more flexible about this."

7 NYC-CENTRIC STATS FROM MATCH'S 'SINGLES IN AMERICA'

♥ **SUBSCRIPTIONS = SEX:** Singles with HBO or Showtime accounts had 21 times more sex on average.

♥ **DATE NIGHT IN:** 83 percent of singles said "listening to music" is their top activity when staying in with a date, followed by cooking together (81 percent) and watching a rom-com (79 percent).

♥ **ABOUT YOUR TECH:** 70 percent of females are turned off by someone who doesn't have internet, while 65 percent find a smartwatch or Alexa a turn-on.

♥ **CLEANLINESS = SEXINESS:** 88 percent of singles find a clean bathroom and nice sheets a turn-on.

♥ **CARING MATTERS:** 84 percent said the No. 1 component for good sex is a caring partner, followed by an enthusiastic partner, a good kisser and communication.

♥ **HOLD THAT "LIKE:"** Just 20 percent of singles think it's appropriate to like a social media post or photo before a first date.

♥ **FLATTER HIM:** 79 percent of men think it's OK for women to compliment them on a first date.

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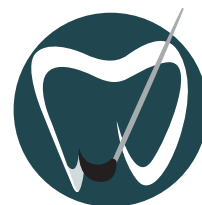
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Here's how the Valentine's Day card industry got its start

Before Hallmark, Esther Howard pioneered the prefabricated romance-missive industry in the U.S.



KRISTIN TOUSSAINT
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Long before Valentine's Day could be called a "Hallmark holiday," the romance-card industry got its start in Worcester, Massachusetts, thanks to one woman.

Esther Howland is considered the pioneer of the American Valentine's Day card industry. In the 1800s, she fashioned fancy paper and lace valentines by hand, sparking a business that would boom in the central Massachusetts city.

"The lore is that she was a Mount Holyoke

graduate when she received an [English] Valentine," said Bill Wallace, a historian and executive director at the Worcester Historical Museum. "Her father is a stationer, so here's something she can do — she likes the design and concept, and her father has access to the materials."

Howland started assembling Valentines around the late 1840s (she graduated in 1848) and sold her cards at her father's stationery store. Her designs were so popular that her business blossomed — experts believe it grossed more than \$100,000 a year.

Howland created her ornate Valentines through an assembly-line system in which one worker would lay down a background, the next would add the lace, another adding a decal, someone else

added a poem or verse on top, and so on.

This meant no two ever really looked alike. Her Valentines were cherished, experts say, for their uniqueness and her innovative designs.

But eventually there was competition. A man named Jotham Taft had started assembling Valentines in Grafton, Massachusetts, and Howland ended up partnering with his son, Edward, in 1879 to create the New England Valentine Co.

In 1863, George and Edward Whitney began making Valentines at their family stationery

store, forming the Whitney Valentine Company. With these businesses, Worcester was home to a huge volume of valentine production. Whitney eventually bought out the New England Valentine Co.

Original Howland and Whitney cards can be seen at the Worcester Historical Museum. Wallace said around this time every year, people flock there to celebrate.

"We didn't invent the Valentine," Wallace said,

"but the Valentine industry is something that impacts all of us at some point — we all receive a Valentine. ... It's that creative spirit, it's that individuality of expression and it's a holiday everybody loves."



Howland valentines had distinct, unique designs featuring lace overlaying different colors. COLLECTION OF WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM



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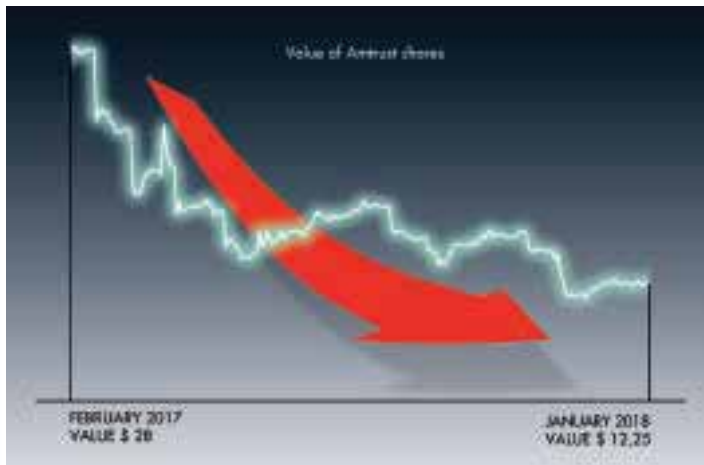
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The majority owners of AmTrust company may be taking money away from shareholders

The majority owners of AmTrust Financial Services may be taking money away from minority shareholders of this company. CEO of Amtrust Barry Zyskind with Karfunkel family and private equity fund Stone Point Capital, who owns large stakes in AmTrust, decreased value of its shares in order to buy the whole company for \$12.25. This price is lower than its actual value. Minority shareholders might be harmed and may lose their money. AmTrust Financial Services is multinational insurance company focused on property and casualty products, mainly workers compensation.



Graph shows that value of Amtrust shares went down more than 100% in 2017 to current value \$12.25.

In the beginning of 2017, AmTrust traded as high as \$28, which more than 100% above proposed price \$12.25. Moreover, the merger price is significantly below the target price of \$16.00 set by an analyst at SunTrust Robinson on November 27, 2017, and \$15.00 set by an analyst at Compass Point on December 22, 2017.

This share price drop was caused by unconfirmed accounting irregularities and FBI investigation which was announced by Wall Street Journal in April 2017.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the individual author(s)/advertiser and do not necessarily reflect those of the publication, its staff, and/or any/all of the contributors to this site.



CEO and major shareholder of AmTrust Financial, Barry Zyskind, who may be taking away money from shareholders.

Based on the opinion of Arca Capital Group the whole situation regarding FBI investigation and accounting issues was intentional to manipulate and decrease value of the company shares. Moreover, analysis from Pinkerton Investigative Agency shows that FBI investigation of AmTrust Company was not found. This Pinkerton Analysis was ordered by European investment group Arca Capital, significant shareholder of AmTrust. Arca Capital has strong interest that AmTrust management acts on behalf of minority shareholders not against them.

Now, Barry Zyskind and Stone Point Capital want to take company private and buy all the minority stakes for \$12.25, which is more than 100% discount from year ago. If this happens, most of the shareholders can lose their money.

Arca Capital as 13th biggest shareholder is preparing legal steps against AmTrust because they harmed investments of many minority shareholders in significant way. Arca Capital will also submit SEC complaint for non-transparent behavior and manipulation of stock price against AmTrust executives.



New York City has undeveloped lots sitting empty during the current housing crisis. GOOGLE MAPS

Comptroller: In housing crisis, more than 1,000 properties are sitting empty

Comptroller Scott M. Stringer looked at how many properties owned by HPD sit empty and undeveloped in a new report.

KRISTIN TOUSSAINT
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Despite a lack of affordable housing in New York City, more than 1,000 properties owned by the city sit empty, according to a new report from the comptroller's office.

New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer released a report this week which says that the Department of Housing

us all. We're no longer just a tale of two cities — we're becoming a tale of two blocks, with luxury towers on one corner and struggling families on another," Stringer said in a statement.

This report is a follow up on a 2016 audit from Stringer's office, which found that there were more than 1,100 vacant HPD-owned lots.

Ninety percent of the vacant lots from that report remain undeveloped, with HPD having transferred only 64 of the 1,125 lots for development. HPD also transferred ownership of 54 of those lots to other city agencies for use, according to the report.

"Two years ago, as rents were skyrocketing, we

"HPD promised the public that hundreds of those properties would be developed in two years. Now, we've come back two years later, and we've uncovered that the agency's promises were as empty as these vacant lots."

Scott M. Stringer

Preservation and Development is "dragging its feet" on building new affordable housing units on available, vacant lots.

Most of the 1,000 city-owned properties have been designated for residential developments, but are sitting empty — showing, Stringer says, the "glacial pace" of development.

Up to 900 of these empty lots have been owned by the city for at least 20 years and in some cases up to 50 years, the report found.

"New Yorkers are struggling in an affordability crisis that touches

counted vacant properties and gave the world a blueprint for what to do with them. HPD promised the public that hundreds of those properties would be developed in two years," Stringer said. "Now, we've come back two years later, and we've uncovered that the agency's promises were as empty as these vacant lots."

"At a time when we face an affordability crisis, HPD is sitting on precious resources," he added. "And to make matters worse, we know that it has been willfully avoiding the truth for years."



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Study participants must:

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- Be an adult 18 to 65 years old

Qualified participants will receive all study-related care and study medication at no cost.

Compensation up to \$3,250 for time and travel may be available.

► Insurance is not required to participate, and transportation may be available.



For more information, call toll-free

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All persons depicted are models used for illustrative purposes.



NYC doctors bring dire medical aid to remote Puerto Rican island hit by Hurricane Maria

It's been nearly five months since Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, just two weeks after Hurricane Irma, but much devastation still remains, especially in remote areas like the island municipality of Vieques.

That's why a group of doctors, including two from New York City, partnered with a Puerto Rican nonprofit over the weekend to bring medical aid and other supplies to the roughly 8,000 residents on the island eight miles off the eastern Puerto Rico coast.

"I always had the intent to go out into the community to do some outreach and was thinking of areas we could have impact on and what remote areas we could go to, and Vieques came up," Dr. Pedro Torres told Metro ahead of his trip. "We're going to see if we can establish a system to give people someone to speak with, somewhere they can follow up to and someone who can check on their well-being. It's important for them to know they aren't forgotten."

The Queens native has been doing his emergency medicine residency in Ponce, Puerto Rico, for the past three years and experienced Hurricane Maria firsthand.

"The force was unimaginable," he recalled.

Dr. Bilal Khan, a sleep medicine fellow at Norwalk Hospital in Norwalk, Connecticut; Dr. Rachna Patel, a geriatrics fellow at Mount Sinai here in the city, and Dr. Kirill Alekseyev, a Brooklyn native

from Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center in Brooklyn, joined Torres on the trip. The doctors partnered with A la Mano por Puerto Rico, a nonprofit that provides food, water and medical services for those in need.

"So many of them became tearful at the thought we had come to help, but they were the ones who showed us so much strength and taught us a lot about recovery," she said.

"We're going to see if we can establish a system to give people someone to speak with, somewhere they can follow up to and someone who can check on their well-being. It's important for them to know they aren't forgotten."

Dr. Pedro Torres

Alekseyev was surprised to find the majority of the island still only has generator-run power.

"There are only two physicians on the island, and patients that need things like dialysis have to travel to other islands to get it," he said. "It is extremely important for people to go on trips like this one. People in Vieques have no insurance, can't afford medical care or simply don't have access to doctors."

Hurricane Maria, Torres said, "brought to the surface many of the underlying health issues in poor communities. These healthcare disparities have always existed."

The main takeaway of the doctors' trip was to create a foundation to allow Vieques residents to get back on their feet.

"We wanted to ensure that all people had adequate follow-up care, enough medication until their next doctor's visit and communication with social workers who could help with depression and mental health issues," Patel said. **NIKKI M. MASCAU**



The main takeaway of the doctors' trip was to create a foundation to allow Vieques residents to get back on their feet. **MIKE JAYA**

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Can This Medical Technology Possibly Eliminate Or

The Advanced Medical Treatment Every Back & Neck Pain Sufferer Needs To Know

NYC Pain MD is a medical clinic with two locations in New York City that has made a name for itself by treating the worst cases of back or neck pain.

Here is what every back and neck pain sufferer who has failed to respond to other treatments and does not want surgery should know about one of the best treatment options available today for severe back and neck pain including when, why and where you should consider this treatment to get maximum results.

If you suffer with back, neck or nerve pain, you have probably already tried *many* treatments ... especially countless pain medications.

Experienced doctors understand that even though pain medications such as anti-inflammatory pain pills are part of the recommended early treatment plan for back pain... they are rarely the answer.

In most cases they have minimal, short term results (if any) and have a laundry list of potential side effects. Some being serious and even life threatening.

Are there any better options?

Thankfully, advancements in science and technology come extremely fast. And now there is very good option to help relieve the pain.

An option that a lot of back and neck pain sufferers may have never heard of before.

Before we get into these

treatments, please understand this...

NYC Pain MD is a REAL medical clinic that has treated the worst cases of back pain. Patients travel from all over to be treated at one of their clinics for all sorts of joint and muscle pain because they want the best medical treatments available.

What you are about to discover is a REAL medical treatment. Not some miracle cure you see on infomercials or on the internet.

Know this fact: There is no one treatment that will help every case of back pain. And we cannot guarantee this treatment will work for you. But this treatment has already helped countless back and neck pain sufferers who had given up hope. I bet many just like you.

What is this treatment? It's called...

Radiofrequency Neurotomy "Radiofrequency Neurotomy" is often referred to as RF for short. Just what is "RF".

RF is a procedure that is based on the concept that blocking the nerve supply to the painful area may alleviate pain and restore function.

There are many nerves around your spine and one of their jobs is to sense PAIN.

Radiofrequency waves are delivered to these nerves under advanced imaging to "block" the nerves and slow down the pain

Two procedures are performed. First, a test, diagnostic "Block" procedure is done to determine if the procedure is going to decrease

pain and improve function.

If this first "test" procedure is successful, the Radio Frequency Neurotomy is scheduled and performed for longer term relief.

What Results Can You Expect?

Like all real medical procedures... results vary for individual patients. No good and ethical doctor would guarantee any exact results for any procedure... that's just not how things work and it would be less than honest.

That's being said, it is not uncommon for patients to get complete, if not significant relief of their pain shortly after the treatment.

How Long Do The Results Last?

This procedure "impairs" the nerves pain signals... it does not destroy them. Therefore, the results are safe but not completely permanent. But, many patients get relief for 6 months... 12 months.... 18 months for some even longer. The great news is - another procedure can be safely preformed for more relief if necessary.

While we cannot claim this is a complete "permanent cure" . . . it can be a godsend for so many who were in constant pain.

Really... what would it be worth if you could get out of pain for long enough so you could start enjoying your everyday life again?

Would it be worth it to be

able to finally get a good night's sleep again?

How about being able to go for a simple walk or just do your basic daily chores without worrying about so much pain?

Is It Safe?

Yes. This procedure has been done countless times and continues to have an excellent safety record. It is minimally invasive and *is not surgical*.

Who Should Try This Treatment?

RF should be considered after other treatments, such as anti-inflammatory pain medication and physical therapy do not offer good enough results.

RF has also been found effective AFTER back surgery when patient's still feel pain.

The pain after a failed back surgery can be debilitating for some and this procedure may be the only thing that helps give you relief.

What To Do Next If You Are In Pain And The "X" Factor

Here is the "X" factor many do not consider that might be the difference between you getting the best possible treatment or not.

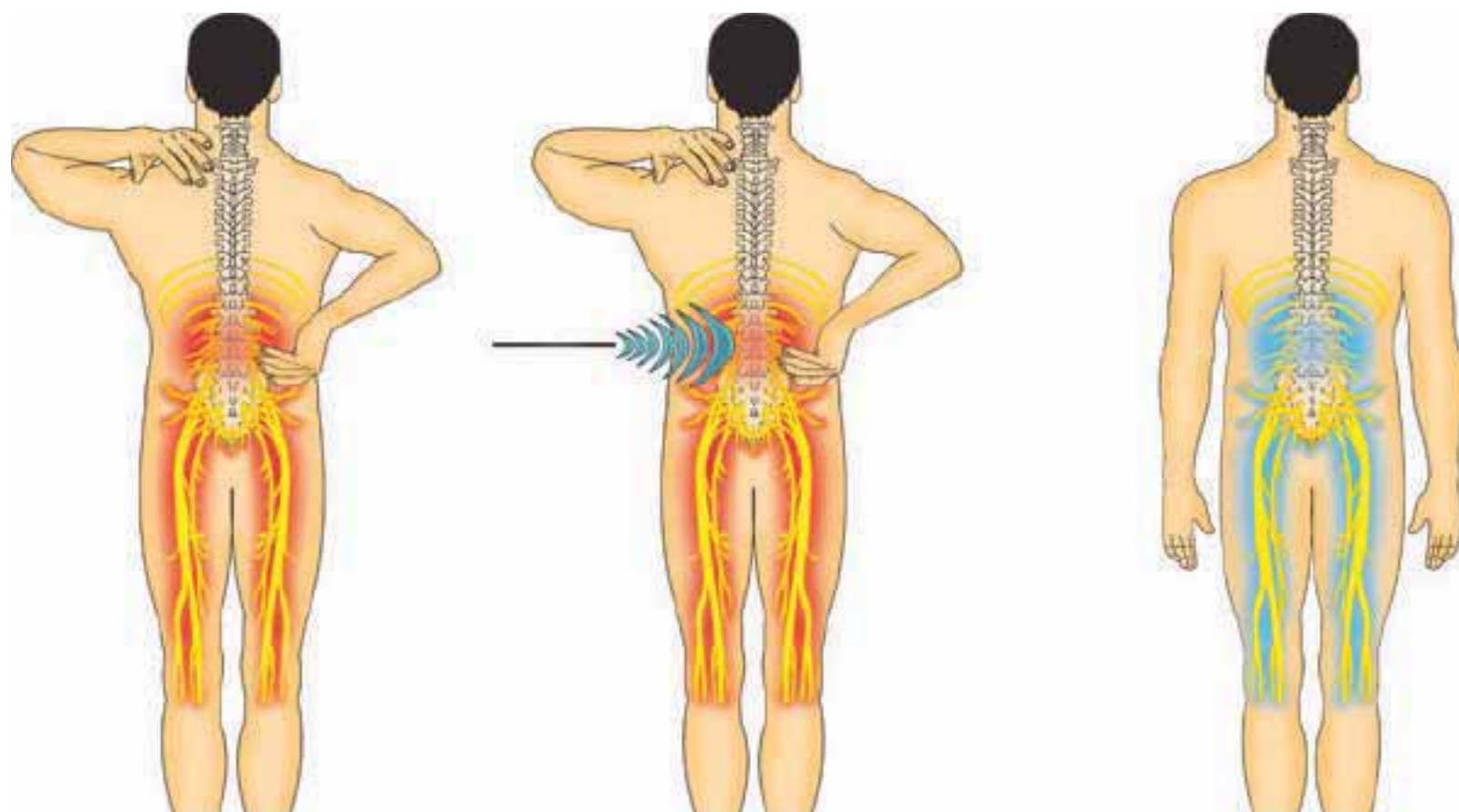
Many experts suggest choosing a medical clinic that offers all these treatments and has the proper, most advanced technology all under one roof without the need for a surgical center or hospital.

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c For Promising Back Pain Treatment

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w - No Matter How Bad The Pain Is Or How Many Other Treatments Have Failed

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New Yorkers confess how far they've gone for a booty call — literally

What would you do for a little hanky-panky? These frisky New Yorkers spill the lengths they've gone to for a good roll in the sack.



Is a late-night hookup worth the \$50 cab fare? Some in New York City seem to think so. **ISTOCK**

MEGAN FU
letters@metro.us

With the so-called cuffing season in full swing, booty calls may be few and far between. Even with the convenience of dating apps, the sheer size of New York City paired with the perpetually unreliable MTA can make for a difficult late-night hookup.

But with a little determination anything is possible. And so in the spirit of love and lust, Metro spoke with a few New Yorkers who went the distance in the name of a one- (or two- or three-) night stand. Here's what they had to say.

Lesson: Sometimes men *won't* do anything for sex

Name: Maya*

Age: 30

She lives in: Brooklyn

Her hookup lives in: Hoboken, New Jersey

Mode of transportation: Telecommuting

Estimated travel time: zero

How they met: Happn
“This hot guy messaged me on Happn when I was visiting a girlfriend in Hoboken. Our messages started off sweet and respectful until he learned that I didn't actually live in Hoboken — that I was a Brooklynite. He told me, ‘Sorry, Brooklyn's too far for me to travel.’ I was like, ‘Are you serious?’ He unapologetically argued there were plenty of women in Broboken. So the sweet, get-to-know-you messages turned to sexting, and I was fine with it. Sexting turned to phone sex, and I was just as fine with that. This dude was not willing to travel across lower Manhattan for real sex. I respected his honesty.”

Lesson: A good “Sunday kind of love” requires a weeknight encore

Name: Sierra*

Age: 25

She lives in: Brooklyn

Her hookup lives: Mount Vernon, New York

Mode of transportation: Driving

Estimated travel time: 30 to 50 minutes

How they met: At a party

“People in Mount Vernon, they're not as ‘hood’ as I am, so that was really interesting. The first time we hooked up I didn't care about the distance. I was like, ‘Oh, my God, he looks so f—ing good.’ I wasn't looking for anything permanent, and I was also dating people in my local area. But then we kept on talking and it was more serious. I was like, ‘Oh s—t, I'm not comfortable with him just being my Sunday guy. The D is good, and he's cute!’ So he became my Sunday and Wednesday — and sometimes Thursday, Friday guy.”

Lesson: Podcasts are a booty-caller's best friend

Name: Alex*

Age: 25

He lives in: South Williamsburg/Bushwick

His hookup lives in: Upper West Side

Mode of transportation: Subway

Estimated travel time: 40 minutes to an hour

How they met: Coffee

Meets Bagel
“She worked overnight shifts for a news organization in town, so her hours and my hours were already at odds before anything even started. ... After a while, things just didn't work out between

us, and that was that. We saw each other for a month or two about once or twice a week. That first time, I was a little bit worried [about the distance] but I also figured, ‘Why not?’ I listened to podcasts for the most part [during the commute].”

Lesson: Always check your dating app radius

Name: Phil*

Age: 26

He lives in: Hudson Yards

His hookup lives in: Westchester

Mode of transportation: Uber

Estimated travel time: 45 minutes to an hour

How they met: On

Tinder
“I didn't really think anything of it — whether it was good or bad or funny, it was just whatever. I met him on Tinder, we had been on a couple of dates over the summer, but he lived in Westchester but worked in the city. The first time we hooked up I wasn't concerned about the distance because I just saw it as a summer fling. One of the last times we hooked up was a night when I was out with my friends in the East Village or the Lower East Side, and I got a text from him and so I decided to take an Uber all the way up to Westchester. The commute wasn't that big of a deal. I was pretty drunk and just texting friends. But yeah, I would not go that distance again and actually have reset the radius on my app to 10 to 15 miles now.”

*Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals.

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Do love-themed street names equal real estate amore?

Sharestates looked at streets with names like Hart, Diamond and Valentine to see what effect romance has on sales.



NIKKI M. MASCALI
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Themed street names have an effect on home values. iStock

There are many factors that play into how a listing fares in New York's real estate game, but being that today is Valentine's Day, does love — as in love-themed street names — lead to amore when it comes to selling your home?

Perhaps, according to new data from real estate marketplace Sharestates. The company looked at the ROI (return on investment), ARV (after-repair value), median sales prices and increase in demand based on the amount of real estate loans in

the area for Valentine-y streets called everything from Hart Street and Diamond Street to Valentine Avenue in New York City, upstate New York and on Long Island.

Homes on Hart Street in Brooklyn had the largest equity ROI with 48.38 percent — as well as the highest median home value, which came in at just north of \$1 million. Hart Street, however, had both the second lowest ARV (47.33 percent) and increase in demand between 2016 and 2017, though the latter saw an

increase of more than 71 percent.

Hartland Avenue in Queens Village saw a 100 percent increase in demand and the second-highest ARV (64 percent). Homes there have a median value of \$471,800.

Diamond Street in Brooklyn had just a 1.67 percent ROI, but the highest ARV at 67.25 percent. Demand increased 300 percent between 2016 and 2017, and the area had the second-highest median home values, at \$990,700.

Valentine Avenue in the Bronx had an ARV of 52.67 percent and a 200 percent increase in demand, while Valentine Road in Newburgh, Orange County, had no increase in demand.

And because no Valentine's Day would be complete without some flowers, Flower Road in Massapequa, Long Island, had a 29.50 percent ROI and 300 percent increase in demand.

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Japanese athlete is first to be kicked out of Pyeongchang for banned substance

Kei Saito, a Japanese short track speed skater, was suspended Tuesday after failing an out-of-competition doping test he took upon arriving in Pyeongchang.

According to a press release issued by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), the 21-year-old college senior, who was scheduled to compete in the men's 5,000-meter relay qualifier today, tested positive for the banned substance acetazolamide.

Acetazolamide is a diuretic, or "water pill" consumed to reduce altitude sickness, but diuretics can be used to mask performance-enhancing substances. It, as well as diuretics in general, is included on the World Anti-Doping Agency's list of prohibited substances.

According to CAS, Saito "accepted on a voluntary basis to be provisionally suspended and to leave Olympic Village."



Kei Saito trains for his speed skating event. GETTY IMAGES

"I have never used anabolic steroids so I have never needed to try to hide it."

Kei Saito

This ban, resulting from the test Saito took on Feb. 4, is reportedly the first doping case for Japan at a Winter Games.

"I am extremely shocked by the test results that have come back," Saito said in a statement, according to Kyodo News. "I have never considered doping. I have never used anabolic steroids so I have never

needed to try to hide it. I have no motive to use this substance nor do I have anything to gain by using this substance."

Saito went on to say that acetazolamide could have only entered his system if he "took it unknowingly and [it] happened by accident."

"... I plan to fight to prove my innocence," Saito, who was a member of Japan's 2013 World Junior Championships bronze medal 3,000-meter relay team, continued.

CAS said final decisions may be appealed only after the Winter Games come to a conclusion. And Yasuo Saito, vice president of the Japanese Olympic Committee, said the organization would "offer him full support through this."

"We want to make it clear we have not admitted to a violation," the VP said. "I want to stress the 'provisional' part of this decision." SAM BRODSKY

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Emily Mortimer won't talk politics



Mortimer joins an all-star cast in "The Party," including the likes of Timothy Spall, Cillian Murphy and Patricia Clarkson. PICTUREHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

But the English actress will say she adored satirizing all things political in "The Party."



GREGORY WAKEMAN
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When it comes to the state of political discourse, British actress Emily Mortimer has a rather curt and forthright opinion: "We're all just absurd."

Things have become so bad that Mortimer — who sounds about as English as they come, but now calls the United States home — is terrified of talking about

politics.

Thankfully, she was able to find solace in "The Party," a dark comedy from Sally Potter's that follows a group of friends coming together for one evening, celebrating the political ascent of Janet (Kristin Scott Thomas). What unfolds is a wicked and witty satire on the way that people talk about politics — or don't.

"It feels a bit like a medicine for the modern age," Mortimer says over the phone. "Because it is a satire on these people that have these firmly held political beliefs."

"I love that she satirizes these characters,

and that is particularly timely because nowadays everyone is so sure of what they think," she continues. "And that feels quite scary to me. It scares me that everyone is so sure they're right."

"Between social media and what is happening politically, everyone has got such a firmly held opinion. The minute that everyone feels that they are right, and they know what's right, that can be really scary. Our politics shouldn't be taken so seriously."

While Mortimer thinks that politics are "incredibly important and vital," she also believes that people need

to be more humble with their views. And that's exactly why she's so proud of "The Party."

"Politics are subjective," she says. "And we are all as ridiculous as each other and we are all absurd and we are all going to die."

"My dad always used to talk about domino opinions," Mortimer continues. "That thing of, 'When you know one thing about somebody, you know everything.' If you know that they are anti-gun control or pro-choice, you know what they feel about every issue."

"It feels like people have lined themselves up in a militant way.



GETTY

There's no room for nuance or a grey area, and for a sense of humor. I feel like 'The Party' is an antidote to that."

One thing Mortimer loves even more? The terse running time of the "The Party," which allows the film to unfold like a brisk slap in the face.

"Every film is like two and a half hours nowadays," she says. "It is a f—king nightmare. 70 minutes? I am in. It meant I loved the film immediately."

You can see if you feel the same way when "The Party" is released in New York and Los Angeles this Friday, Feb. 16.

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If you're planning on spending Valentine's Day on your couch, you're in luck.



RACHAEL VAUGHAN CLEMMONS
rachael.clemmons@metro.us

Valentine's Day is nice and all, but maybe you're on a one-way train to Spinster Town, USA. Maybe you don't feel like sharing a day that was basically invented by the greeting-card industry with some person you may or may

not care about. Maybe you're single and the thought of mingling makes you queasy.

Whatever the reason, if you need a way to spend your Valentine's Day solo, don't fret! When in doubt, sup on a meal-for-one whilst binge watching television. Here are some of our favorite episodes to get you in the mood — from the Valentine's Day-themed, to the ones that are simply romantic as hell. We give you permission to feel every single feel.



"30 Rock,"

St. Valentine's Day (Hulu)

When Liz Lemon accidentally asks out hot Dr. Drew, shenanigans ensue. Everything that can go wrong, does. Salma Hayek waxing poetic about a McFlurry — "The soft swirl of vanilla and the hard crunch of candy and cookies" — is weirdly and wonderfully sensual.

"Parks and Recreation,"

Galentine's Day (Netflix)

This episode is a classic for a reason — instead of romance, it focuses on the loving relationships between friends. It has all the best parts of a "Parks and Rec" episode: lots of love, Leslie doing the most and Ann being beautiful but ultimately seeming not integral to the plot. It's perfect.



"True Blood," I Wish I Was The Moon (HBO)

Memory-loss, Abercrombie-wearing Eric Northman is a very entertaining Eric Northman. In this episode, sexy frenemy Sookie Stackhouse becomes his sexy lover — it's "True Blood" at its best. In fact, it's so good, you could almost forgive Alan Ball for, well, the entirety of season three.



"Black Mirror,"

San Junipero (Netflix)

If there's only one episode of "Black Mirror" that you watch, let it be this one. It's emotional, romantic, sexy and optimistic, a rare feat for both an episode of "Black Mirror" and for much of television these days. A nightclub encounter between two young women in a 1980s paradise goes to unexpected heights. There's love! And hope! And ah-may-zing performances from Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Mackenzie Davis. It's, dare we say it, a truly beautiful episode of television.

Every single episode of

"Poldark" (PBS)

Not much happens in "Poldark," a Masterpiece drama that's mostly about the costs of family honor and running literal mines. But there is a lot of longing, and the first season has enough shirtless scything and scenery porn, courtesy of beautiful Cornwall, to make up for it. Also, Aidan Turner is very attractive, which helps.



"Altered Carbon,"

The Wrong Man (Netflix)

Ah, "Altered Carbon." Fascinating. Sexy. Confusing. In "The Wrong Man," the series is peak those things, with Kovacs — played very sexily by Joel Kinnaman and his extremely broad shoulders — finally finding out whose sleeve he's in. Bonus? He (thankfully) makes good on the sexual tension he's shared with Ortega for four entire episodes. Trust us, it's worth it.

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Steve Aoki talks 'Kolony' tour, Gronk and pushing the boundaries of music

The world-renowned DJ reveals how he keeps the party going at 40.



MATT JUUL
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Even at the age of 40, the party never stops for Steve Aoki.

Not that he's complaining. It's his job to travel the world so he can throw cakes at people's faces while dropping beats for thousands of screaming fans every night—it's not a bad gig. And despite routinely playing more than 300 shows a year, the DJ and producer hasn't lost any enthusiasm for his craft, so don't expect him to slow down.

Aoki, the son of wrestling legend and Benihana

founder Rocky Aoki, is back on the road in 2018 in support of his recently released fourth studio album "Kolony." Ahead of his trip to New York on Wednesday night, the Grammy-nominated star explains to Metro why he continues to stay so passionate about his energetic live shows.

"You think about how many tours I've done and how many shows I've done. What is the motivating factor? It's the music, man," Aoki says. "It's the connection, making sure there's a strong connection with me and my fans, new and old. If I'm able to make music that's consistently having that relevant connection with them, then that's really the best feeling."

Aoki is especially excited about his latest tour, as

rising hip-hop star Desiigner is joining him for the cross country trips. The rapper also worked with Aoki on a remix of the international hit "Mic Drop" by K-pop group BTS.

Throughout his career, Aoki has made a habit of working with some of the best names in the industry, regardless of what genre they're known for. He's previously collaborated with the likes of Kendrick Lamar and Linkin Park, while his new album features a slew of big names, including Migos, Gucci Mane and Lil' Yachty. Aoki tells Metro that he's currently working on a track with Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine that he can't wait to show fans.

Although he's primarily known as an electro house DJ, Aoki enjoys the



Steve Aoki performs at the Upstate Concert Hall in Clifton Park, New York, tonight. GETTY IMAGES

challenge of pushing the genre's boundaries by dipping his toes into other types of music.

"I'm always trying to rebuild the wheel and reinvent and transform and evolve the sound," Aoki says. "You want to be enough in the forefront where you're changing the game for yourself and also being part of pushing the entire culture forward."

Besides surrounding himself with music's biggest stars, Aoki generally

just likes to hang out with people who are as "energized and driven" as he is, which is how he struck up a friendship with Patriots star Rob Gronkowski. The duo got to party together in South Beach last year, and Aoki admits that he loved every minute of it.

"He's so full of life. He's just got so much energy. Like that dude is almost like me, but a football player," Aoki says. "I'm so energized and driven with all the things that I do and I really look in other peo-

ple to have that same kind of energy and drive. I definitely feel that in Gronk."

As one of the world's highest-paid DJs, Aoki has accomplished quite a bit over the past two decades. While he hopes for more big opportunities in the future, he's just grateful for everything he's already been given.

"I never thought I'd be even here," Aoki says. "When the opportunity comes, you got to take it and then you got to do the best that you can with it."

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EVA KIS
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Not expecting a box of chocolates this Valentine's Day? Give yourself the sweet treat of a candy-themed manicure or minty blowout at Sweet ReTreat, the pop-up candy shop-meets-beauty salon your teenage self could only dream about.

Open from Feb. 13-14, Sweet ReTreat provides fantasy treatments pulled right from Willy Wonka's playbook. (Because no man who goes around in an orange top hat and a purple coat made of crushed velvet is unacquainted with beauty products, hm?)

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ing a piece of gum, but for your whole body) and mint-infused blowouts — think Altoids for your hair.

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And because after all those treat-ments your sweet tooth is probably jonesing for a fix, there are tons of fun-size candy packs to keep your day on a sugar high.

We can't believe we're saying this, but could Valentine's Day stick around a little longer?

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LEANDRO JUSTEN

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Because participants need to enroll in the study within 48 hours of becoming ill, it's important to get in touch with the study team as soon as possible after symptoms appear.

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KATE MOONEY
kate.mooney@metro.us

A certain holiday has arrived, one that is certain to make lonely hearts all across the world lament their single status. Here's an idea: Don't fall for it. So what if you don't have a hot date? Why not stay

home and do something nice for yourself, by yourself? Here are a few epic and easy solo meal ideas to make tonight that will make you feel like the king or queen of your own heart.

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Monthly rent includes heat, hot water and gas for cooking. Seniors will be required to meet income guidelines and additional selection criteria to qualify. Income guidelines are subject to change. One application per household.

Applications may be downloaded from:
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77 Water Street, 7th floor New York, NY 10005



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www.metcouncil.org/housing or requested by mail from Met Council: East 23rd Street Residence
77 Water Street, 7th floor New York, NY 10005.



Please include a self-addressed envelope.
No Broker or application fee.



Cook yourself a steak

A juicy steak, seared just right, certainly has a way of marking an occasion. Make it medium rare: rough on the outside, still tender on the inside, just like you. Bon Appetit has a recipe for an easy steak with pan sauce. Fire up a cast-iron pan over medium heat and cook a well-seasoned steak (cut of your choice) in oil for 5 minutes on each side, until a nice crust forms. Remove the meat and add butter, garlic, shallots, mustard, worcestershire and a sprig of thyme to the pan drippings for the perfect flavorful and no-fuss sauce. Enjoy with red wine and a side salad, or go the steak frites route and fire up some potatoes (seriously, a bag of frozen crinkle-cut fries will do just fine). Find the recipe at bonappetit.com.



home

To satisfy your sweet tooth without the headache of baking (and all the damn dishes that follow), Serious Eats has an easy 20-minute chocolate pudding recipe that will do the trick. Whisk cornstarch, cocoa powder, salt and sugar in a saucepan over medium heat, bringing to a low boil, until thickened. Remove from heat and stir in 4 ounces of melted dark chocolate and 2 tablespoons of vanilla. That's it. Dude, you're winning. Find the recipe at seriouseats.com.



I don't know about you, but nachos are in my top five for delicious comfort foods. They're a crunchy, carb-filled indulgence that can be as fresh and healthy as you want, depending on the toppings you choose. Smitten Kitchen has a corn-and-black-bean nacho recipe that hits the spot. Fill a baking sheet with tortilla chips topped with corn and poblanos (charred over a gas flame), black beans, monterey jack and cheddar cheese. Bake at 400 degrees for about 15 minutes, then remove from the heat and top with all kinds of goodies — sliced avocado, jalapenos, radishes, cilantro, shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes and, of course, plenty of hot sauce. Find the recipe at smittenkitchen.com.



Just because you're home and alone doesn't mean you shouldn't go all out. A lobster feast for one is the ultimate power move for the super single. (Vegetarians, you might want to stop reading now.) Feast your eyes on the crustacean of your dreams and then, well, kill him to your liking.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil and then add your dude until he turns nicely rouged, about eight minutes a pound. Then go to town on 'im with melted butter. If you're so inclined, enjoy with a side of boiled corn and mashed potatoes. Find any recipe online.

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State of the Union: Assessing the Mets' starting rotation options

With pitchers and catcher's beginning their first full workouts of spring training today, the Mets need a change of luck within their rotation.



JOE PANTORNO
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

Once again, the New York Mets enter spring training with the hopes of their 2018 season hinging on the linchpin that is the starting rotation.

It's a notion that has burned them for a ma-

jority of the last five seasons as the expected future faces of the franchise on the mound went down with debilitating injury after debilitating injury.

As of now, all five members of 'Generation K 2.0' are slated to make it to Opening Day. A healthy season could lift the Mets from middle-of-the-pack in the National League East to an actual division contender, but management hasn't done anything yet to really prepare should injuries sweep through the rotation once again.

Here is what the Mets are preparing to enter 2018 with on the mound:

NOAH SYNDERGAARD



Syndergaard is far and away the No. 1 ace as he looks to rebound from an injury-shortened 2017 season. With a chance to fully exhibit a changeup he developed for last year, the 25-year-old looks ready to go after admitting to feeling more flexible this winter.

2017 STATS: 7 starts, 1-2 record, 2.97 ERA, 34 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Torn lat, missed 5 months (2017)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 16-7, 2.91 ERA, 220 K's

JACOB deGROM



The only consistently healthy pitcher last season, deGrom was the only Met to pitch in more than 120 innings.

2017 STATS: 31 starts, 15-10, 3.53 ERA, 239 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Ulnar nerve surgery (missed last month of 2016 season)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 14-8, 3.30 ERA, 235 K's

MATT HARVEY



Injuries have basically forced Harvey to re-learn how to pitch as he struggled to find any sort of velocity or control in a heinous 2017 season. With this being a contract year, he'll have a lot to prove.

2017 STATS: 18 starts, 5-7, 6.70 ERA, 67 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Tommy John surgery (missed 2014), Thoracic Outlet Syndrome (2016), Stress injury, right scapula (2017)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 8-7, 4.02 ERA, 125 K's

ZACK WHEELER



His comeback from an extended recovery from Tommy John surgery did not go as well as expected. While health is a top priority, Wheeler has to find a way to wrangle in a fastball that is wild at times.

2017 STATS: 17 starts, 3-7, 5.21 ERA, 81 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Tommy John surgery (2015-16), right biceps tendinitis and stress reaction (2017)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 6-7, 4.30 ERA, 95 K's

STEVEN MATZ



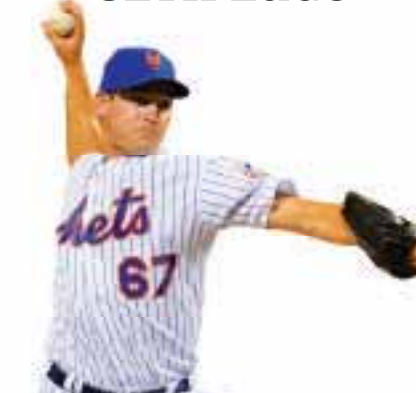
The most fragile of the Mets starters, Matz hasn't been able to put a full season together since his call-up in 2015. But as the only lefty of the staff, he's on the fast track to make the starting rotation.

2017 STATS: 13 starts, 2-7, 6.08 ERA, 85 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Torn lat muscle (2015), shoulder tightness (2016), nerve irritation (2017 season)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 6-7, 4.30 ERA, 95 K's

SETH LUGO



After starring as a debutant spot starter 2016 and with Puerto Rico in the World Baseball Classic prior to the start of 2017, Lugo's arm basically gave out, sparking a mediocre sophomore campaign.

2017 STATS: 8 starts, 7-5 record, 4.71 ERA, 48 K's

INJURY HISTORY: Arm fatigue (2017)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 4-4, 3.99 ERA, 70 K's

ROBERT GSELLMAN



Another one of the heroes of 2016 that helped the Mets to the Wild Card Game, Gsellman couldn't put things together last year as the league figured him out.

2017 STATS: 22 starts, 8-7 record, 5.19 ERA, 82 K's


INJURY HISTORY: Strained hamstring (2017)

PROJECTED 2018 STATS: 3-5, 3.99 ERA, 70 K's

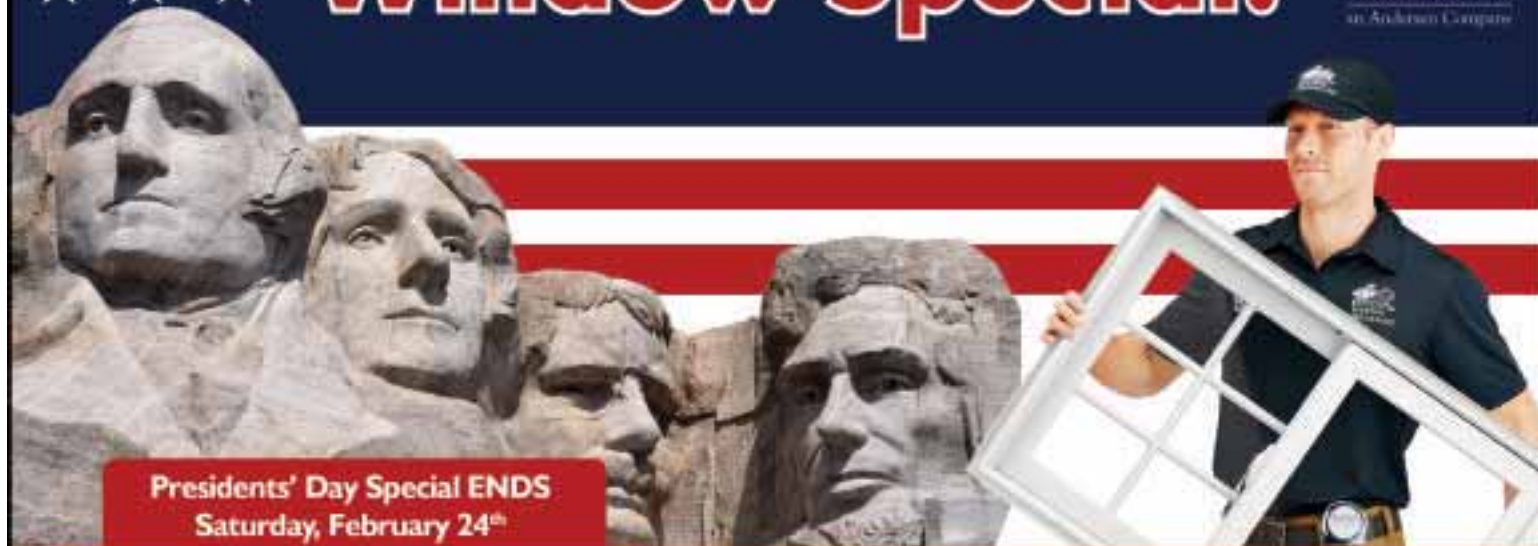


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What to watch at the Olympics tonight

WOMEN'S CURLING USA vs. GREAT BRITAIN

The United States women's curling team is attempting to erase a 10th-place finish at the 2014 Sochi Games. They'll feature a face already familiar to the tournament as **BECCA HAMILTON** took part in the mixed doubles tournament earlier in the Games.



ALPINE SKIING WOMEN'S GIANT SLALOM

The rescheduled women's giant slalom will finally occur on Wednesday night, featuring **MIKAELA SHIFFRIN**, who got her Olympics started on Tuesday night in her favored event, the slalom.



WOMEN'S HOCKEY USA vs. CANADA

Buckle up, hockey fans. You're about to get a gold-medal match nice and early in the women's tournament as the United States and Canada face off in Group A action. Of the five Olympics that have featured women's hockey since 1998, the United States and Canada have squared off for the gold medal four times.

Canada has the edge though, taking each of the last three title matches between the nations.

The United States is coming off a 5-0 thrashing of the Olympic Athletes of Russia where **JOCELYN LAMOUREUX-DAVISON** recorded a pair of goals.



FIGURE SKATING PAIR SKATING FREE SKATE

The second round of the pairs competition takes place on Wednesday night as **ALEXA SCIMECA KNIERIM** and her husband, **CHRIS KNIERIM**, look to finish strong after their short program on Tuesday.



SNOWBOARDING MEN'S SNOWBOARD CROSS

The United States will have four members taking part in the Snowboard cross, led by veteran **NICK BAUMGARTNER**. For every heat, six snowboarders race through a downhill course consisting of various obstacles and jumps.



ALL IMAGES: GETTY IMAGES

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Across

- 1 Looped tau cross
- 5 Please greatly
- 10 Accord
- 14 Barn topper
- 15 Lady fox
- 16 Stravinsky or Sikorsky
- 17 Scent
- 18 Leaves unmentioned
- 19 Grey of Western novels
- 20 Crushing defeat
- 22 Escapades
- 23 Hebrew letter after shin
- 24 Trivial
- 27 Discolored with spots or streaks
- 31 Undress
- 35 Neck annoyance
- 36 Exude moisture
- 38 Yours and mine
- 39 Mare's morsel
- 40 Flat-topped hills
- 41 Stockholm carrier
- 42 Gouge
- 44 Fix as lipstick
- 45 Terra--
- 47 Open and aboveboard
- 49 Diplomat's post
- 51 Marshal's band
- 53 Response to a rodent
- 54 Aussie minerals
- 57 Unmatched
- 62 Sanskrit dialect

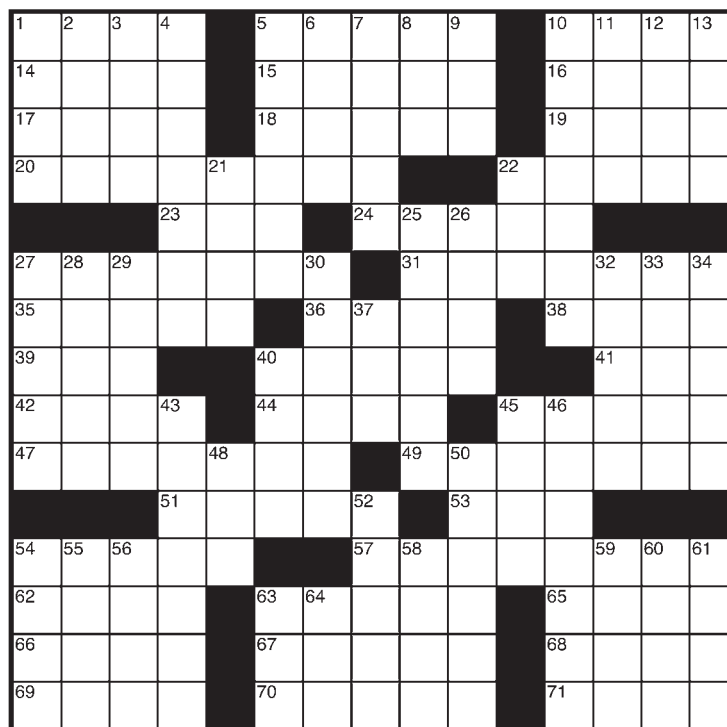
- 63 Red meat
- 65 Asian mountains
- 66 Collar style
- 67 Binchy of best-sellers
- 68 1492 vessel
- 69 Motor sound
- 70 Auto-racing family
- 71 Hold as an opinion

Down

- 1 Declare frankly
- 2 Zip
- 3 Put on a tie
- 4 Dissenter
- 5 Develop slowly
- 6 Airport vehicle
- 7 Self-evident truth
- 8 New Year in Hanoi
- 9 Space widths
- 10 Peru conqueror

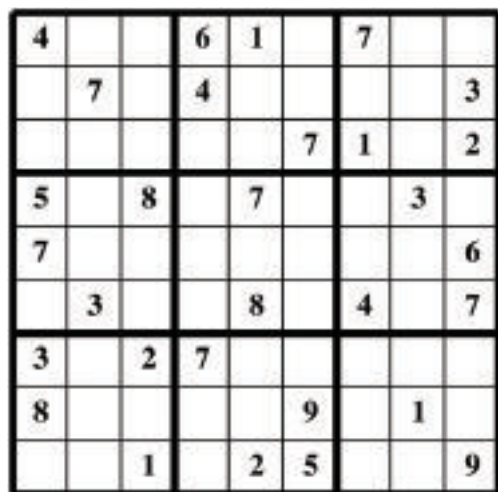
- 11 Biology gel
- 12 Hit on the head
- 13 Very, to Yvette
- 21 Flagrant
- 22 Part of UCLA
- 25 Form a thought
- 26 Pinches off
- 27 Tea cake
- 28 Peculiarity
- 29 Gee follower
- 30 Resides
- 32 Kicks out
- 33 Sitters' banes
- 34 Dreaded assignment
- 37 Paul Anka's "-- Beso"
- 40 CEO degrees
- 43 "Kim" novelist
- 45 Driver with a handle
- 46 Raiders' home
- 48 IBM and GE
- 50 More timid
- 52 Fencers' blades
- 54 Sheikh's cartel
- 55 Hurricane track
- 56 Matty or Felipe
- 58 Icicle site
- 59 Wiesel or Ducommun
- 60 Rational
- 61 Where Anna met a king
- 63 The Mustangs
- 64 Pantyhose shade

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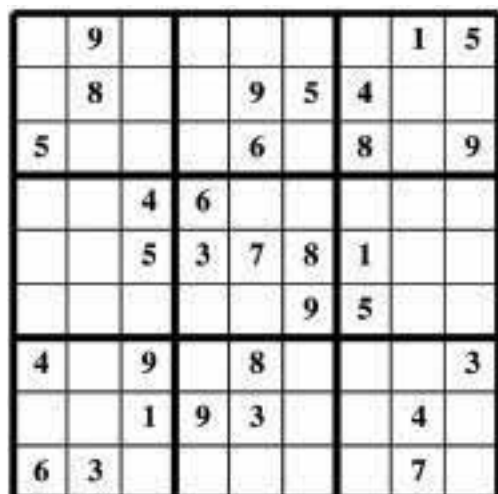


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easy



hard



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Aries Express interest in helping someone ambitious and who is heading in the same direction as you. If you invest financially in something, make sure it offers solid returns.



Taurus Emotions will surface if you are dealing with someone who is overbearing or abusive. Don't start arguments you can't win. Protect yourself against insult or injury.



Gemini Follow through with your plans. Stick to your budget. Take care of crucial matters and details personally. Don't promise the impossible or give in to unreasonable demands.



Cancer You'll be tempted by someone or something that is out of your price range. Don't be fooled by gimmicks or smooth talkers looking to make a sale. Do your research.



Leo Physical activity will ease stress and keep you out of trouble. Walk away from anyone playing emotional games with you or taking advantage of your kindness and generosity.



Virgo Look over contracts, settlements, and medications you are taking, and make notes that will help improve performance. Plan something special with someone you love.



Libra Share your ideas and collaborate with someone reliable. What you accomplish by participating in worthy causes will change the way you handle people and bad influences.



Scorpio You'll face opposition if you overreact. Expect a dramatic response from someone close to you if you overstep your bounds. Consider options before you make a decision.



Sagittarius A change in the way you handle your money will encourage a better lifestyle and daily routine. Make changes that encourage saving more and spending less.



Capricorn Keep busy. Don't allow yourself too much time to engage in arguments or get involved in something that will leave you in a vulnerable position.



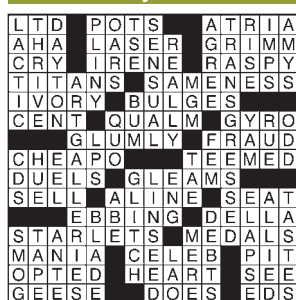
Aquarius A high-energy approach to life will help you stay fit and feel good about the way you look and feel. Aim high when it comes to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Pisces Observation will give you a solid foundation to build a case. Take your time, gather the facts and prepare to present your findings.

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